presentations in this regards to the Government so far :

(d) whether it is a fact Union Government is not at all serious about the illegal deduction that is going on and Family Pension Fund Scheme was introduced hurriedly without much more planning and consultation : and

(e) if so, the details thereof; and if reply is negative the reasons thereof ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR) : (a) to (e) The establishments covered under the EPF and MP Act are required to remit to the Family Pension Fund a part of the contribution representing 1-1/6% of the wage from and out of the contribution payable by the employer and the employees in each month under section 6 of the Act. Under section 9 of the EPF and MP Act the Employees Provident Fund is deemed to be a recognised provident fund for the purpose of the Income Tax Act. Therefore the question of illegal diversion of the provident fund contribution to the family pension does not arise. No specific representation regarding illegal diversion of the provident fund contribution to the Family Pension Fund has been received by the Government However certain employees unions had filed writ petitions challenging the provisions of the Family Pension Scheme in the High Court of Bombay. The Court upheld the validity of the Family Pension Scheme and dismissed their petitions. The petitioners have now filed a Special Leave Petition before the Supreme Court of India The Family Pension Scheme was considered and approved by the Central Board of Trustees, Employees Provident Fund which is a tripartite body consisting of the representatives of the employers, employees and the Government. The Scheme was notified for implementation after its clearance by the Ministries of Law and Finance. As such the Scheme has been introduced after due consideration and consultation.

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POVERTY OF THE AGRICULTURAL WORKERS IN THE COUNTRY

2413. SHRI DEBABRATA BISWAS : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the increasing poverty among the agricultural workers in the country ; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR) : (a) and (b) Government is aware that the incidence of Poverty among agriculture labourers is quite high. Consequently, under the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), agriculture labourers have been included in the target group of beneficiaries eligible for assistance under the Programme. Assistance is given in the form of subsidy by the Government and term credit by banks for self-employment ventures in the rural areas to enable poor families to cross the poverty line. During 1992-93 7.2 lakh agricultural labourers were assisted under IRDP.

JRY is another programme of the Government which is a wage employment programme. The target group under this programme includes agricultural workers.

SURVEY CONDUCTED BY GOVERNMENT FOR AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS

2414. **SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR :**

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have conducted any survey of agricultural labourers and their family members in respect of their income ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) whether Government are considering to introduce a pension scheme for all those who live below poverty line ;